

THIRTY FIVE CENTS

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# MONTHLY REVIEW

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**THREE BRITISH LEFT LABOR VIEWS** VOL. 2

**SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY**

JON NAAR

**THE BRITISH PEACE MOVEMENT**

A BRITISH SOCIALIST

**AS A SOCIALIST SEES IT**

G. D. H. COLE

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EDITORS . . . LEO HUBERMAN . . . PAUL M. SWEETZ

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## NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

The last few weeks have seen a dropping off in the rate of inflow of new subs. This is probably, at least in part, a seasonal phenomenon and as such not too alarming. But it is also no cause for rejoicing, especially since it comes just before the annual testing time that always accompanies the end of a volume. This is the last issue of Vol. II, and a large proportion of subs expire with it. Please check the number under your address: if it's II-12, your sub is finished and it's time for you to renew. *Don't forget that renewals are just as important as new subs.*

The Monthly Review Associates program of lectures got off to a good start in New York last month. On March 6th a meeting on the subject, "Toward an Understanding of Socialist Culture," was addressed by Joshua Kunitz, with Henry Pratt Fairchild in the chair. The audience of about 100 took part in a lively discussion and seemed to find the meeting both informative and enjoyable.

One thing the Associates learned from this meeting was the need to impress upon MR subscribers and associates the desirability of bringing to future meetings *non-subscribers*, friends who are not yet converted to socialism and/or MR. A show of hands at the March 6th meeting indicated that only about one in ten of those present were in this category.

On Thursday, April 19, the second New York meeting of the Associates will be held at Adelphi Hall, 74 Fifth Avenue, at 8:15 sharp. The speaker

(continued on inside back cover)

## THE HOPE FOR PEACE

It is a good time for an overall look at the international situation. The next few months may be decisive for peace or war, for life or death. Where do we stand and where are we going?

The situation is complicated and paradoxical. Every one claims to be peaceful, and no doubt nearly every one is sincere about it. Every one claims to be threatened by aggression, and again no doubt nearly every one is sincere about it. But not every one can be equally right. If in fact every one were peaceful, no one would be threatened by aggression. If in fact every one were threatened by aggression, no one would be peaceful.

This contradiction can be apparently resolved if we assume that somebody is lying. But that doesn't really settle anything. It only poses an even greater puzzle: how do such colossal liars acquire so much influence? It is better to assume that we have to do with warped interpretations than with outright falsehoods. Warped interpretations can be explained from the complexities of real life; falsehoods are all too likely to be attributed to original sin.

It will help us if we begin by making a distinction between two aspects of the present struggle between East and West. On the one hand it is a struggle between sovereign nations; on the other hand it is a struggle between social systems. More confusion arises from failure to distinguish these two aspects of the struggle than from any other single source. In order to counteract this confusion, it may be well to consider the two quite separately.

First, the struggle between nations—power politics, if you will. The term usually implies disapproval, but it has the merit of being accurate: there is no other brand of politics among nations except power politics.

There are two kinds of nations in the world, great powers and all the rest. The great powers, generally speaking, are the ones that have enough economic and military strength to pursue an independent foreign policy. The lesser powers group themselves around the great powers; sometimes a few of them, because of special factors (in which geography always plays an important part), succeed in acquiring a generally respected status as neutrals.

It is usually possible to name a few nations which unquestionably hold great-power rank. In the late thirties, for example, no one could doubt that the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Japan were great powers. Others may aspire to great-power status, and in certain respects may even be treated as great powers: Italy in the thirties is a good example.

World War II knocked out, at least temporarily, all of the great powers except the United States, the Soviet Union, and Britain—and even Britain was left in a very shaky position. The six years since the war have witnessed one major change: the victory of the Chinese Revolution has unified China and made it into a real great power for the first time in modern history. At the present time, therefore, there are four great powers in the world, two on each side of the East-West struggle. France is still treated as a great power, and Germany and Japan clearly hope to regain their positions in the great-power ranks; but right now at any rate none of these former great powers is capable of pursuing an independent course in international affairs.

Great powers are the principal players in the arena of power politics. And they play according to certain rules which can be broken only at the cost of war.

The heart and core of these rules is that each great power has a security zone outside its own frontiers which other great powers must respect. A great power's security zone is not a static thing, given and fixed for all time. It grows and develops as a great power expands, and it contracts as a great power declines. It would be easy to illustrate both phases of this process from the history of Great Britain in the last hundred years. At one time, for example, nearly the whole area from the Straits of Gibraltar through the Mediterranean and the Middle East and right on to the Pacific was a part of Britain's security zone which other powers could invade only at their peril. Since World War II, of course, Britain's security zone has been greatly reduced, though exactly what its boundaries now are is far from clear, probably even in the minds of leading British statesmen. The security zone of the United States has shown comparable changes in the last hundred and fifty years. As early as the 1820s, the Monroe Doctrine warned other powers to keep hands off the western hemisphere, and in recent years the American government has gone to fantastic lengths in attempting to expand the scope of the United States security zone. In any case, the boundaries of a great power's security zone are defined by what may be called a process of probing-and-defense which clarifies to the nation itself and to all others just what it regards as vital to its own safety.

Needless to say, a major war is inevitably followed by a rede-

fining of security zones, and the emergence of a great power by the creation of a new security zone.

A great power violates the rules of the power-politics game—and for all practical purposes that means that it violates another's security zone—for one of three reasons: (1) because of misunderstanding or miscalculation; (2) because it thinks it can get away with it; or (3) because it thinks it can win a war. Generally speaking, we can neglect the first reason: at least under present-day conditions, there is usually ample opportunity to correct a mistake short of war. The other two reasons, however, are of the greatest significance. At the risk of some oversimplification we can say that World War I started because Austria-Hungary thought it could get away with a sharp foray into the Russian security zone; while World War II started because Hitler thought he could win the war which his endless encroachments upon the security zones of other great powers must sooner or later bring on.

This is the way the international system has worked for a long time, and those who manage the affairs of the great powers must be presumed to know it. If they set about deliberately breaking the rules, invading the security zones of other great powers, we must conclude that it is either because they think they can get away with it, or because they are prepared for a war which they believe they can win.

Let us look at the post-World War II situation against this background. Several important changes have taken place in the pattern of security zones. First, certain changes necessarily accompanied the dropping out of several nations from the ranks of the great powers. Second, the United States has vastly increased the scope of its own security zone, and to a certain extent this has been officially recognized as legitimate, even by the Soviet Union—for example, the USSR readily acquiesced in the taking over by the United States of the former Japanese islands which give control over vast expanses of the western Pacific. Third, the Soviet Union—thrice invaded from the west in one generation, and victorious at enormous cost over the latest and greatest threat to her national existence—could and did extend her security to include the greater part of eastern and south-eastern Europe. Whether the Soviet leaders have set definite boundaries to their new security zone is not clear, but at any rate there can be no doubt that they regard it as vital to the nation's safety that there be a broad territorial belt on their western frontiers which is free of the influence of any other great power. Finally, a major change resulted from the emergence of China as a great power in 1949-50. Here again, no precise boundaries can be set, and it is likely that the Chinese will eventually want to extend their security zone to include the whole Asian mainland from Siberia to the Malayan Straits. At the moment, however, they are struggling for much more

modest aims: to establish their right to Formosa, traditionally Chinese territory, and to keep foreign armed force out of North Korea.

Now the essence of United States policy in the whole post-war period has been, first, to refuse to recognize the legitimacy of the Soviet and Chinese security zones; and second, to attempt by force and threats of force to wipe out those security zones altogether. That this is so in the case of China is perfectly obvious. Formosa and Korea were crucial stepping stones in Japan's efforts to conquer all of China. That they should be in hands friendly to China is the very first requirement of Chinese security. ("Korea," says Sumner Welles in *Harper's Magazine*, March, 1951, p. 79, "is of basic significance to China. The control of Korea by any power that may menace the independence of China is a vital danger to the Chinese people.") At present Formosa is held by the American Seventh Fleet, and a formidable American military force, fully equipped with warships, planes, and armor, is attempting to take over Korea. In terms of power politics, the aggressive character of American policy is as plain as anything could possibly be; it has led, moreover, as such policy always does, to its inevitable dénouement in war.

The case is not so clear in eastern Europe. Since there has so far been no actual employment of American military force in that region, the true nature of American policy has been more successfully hidden from view. For this reason it may be well to quote rather extensively from a pamphlet written by Professor Frederick L. Schuman, one of the country's leading authorities on international relations, in 1948. The pamphlet is entitled *The Devil and Jimmy Byrnes* and is an analysis of Byrnes's book, *Speaking Frankly*, which appeared in October, 1947.

On the moot question of whether or not Washington, London, and Moscow reached agreement, before or after Yalta, on "spheres of influence," Mr. Byrnes, all unwittingly, has performed a real service (for those with eyes to see) in settling the issue. There was in fact an agreement that eastern Europe and the Balkans north of Greece should be regarded as a Soviet security zone, while western Europe, Italy, and the Mediterranean, including Greece, were recognized by Moscow as part of the Anglo-American security zone. It is precisely the violation and repudiation of this understanding by Byrnes and Bevin which has driven the Big Three off the road of unity and toward the valley of disaster.... On page 53 [of *Speaking Frankly*] he wrote that Churchill and Eden in Moscow in October, 1944, reached an "informal understanding that, if the British found it necessary to take military action in Greece, the Soviets would not interfere. In return, the British would recognize the right of the

Soviets to take the lead in maintaining order in Rumania." When an anonymous British Foreign Office spokesman on October 16, 1947, declared that this statement was "incorrect," Mr. Byrnes was moved by a desire for self-justification to make a further revelation which demolishes the whole basis of his policy:

"Evidently," he asserted in the *New York Times*, October 18, 1947, "the Foreign Office spokesman is not informed. My statement was based on a message from Prime Minister Churchill to President Roosevelt, dated March 8, 1945, in the first paragraph of which, after deploring Soviet actions in Rumania, Mr. Churchill said: 'We are hampered in our protests against these developments by the fact that, in order to have the freedom to save Greece, Eden and I at Moscow in October recognized that Russia should have a largely preponderant voice in Rumania and Bulgaria while we took the lead in Greece. Stalin adhered very strictly to this understanding during the thirty days' fighting against the Communists and Elás in the city of Athens, in spite of the fact that all this was most disagreeable to him.'"

The question is thus answered: At no time did Moscow protest against or challenge the British action in Greece in 1944-45, shameful as that action was, as long as the Kremlin believed that London and Washington were reconciled to preponderant Soviet influence in the Balkans north of Greece. Yalta and Potsdam seemed to Moscow, and quite plausibly, to confirm this understanding. Byrnes and Bevin repudiated it in August, 1945. Washington and London have been seeking ever since... to challenge and destroy Soviet influence in the area they originally acknowledged to be part of the Soviet security zone. Moscow has retaliated and will continue to do so, since it regards the unity of Slavic Europe under Muscovite leadership as an indispensable condition of Soviet safety which in no way threatens British or American interests—as Roosevelt and, originally, Churchill conceded without question. The subsequent Byrnes-Bevin-Truman-Marshall program for ousting the USSR from eastern Europe and the Balkans and reconstituting these communities as an anti-Soviet bulwark is a direct and open attack upon all the objectives for which the Soviet Union fought and won its war against the Axis.

That was written three years ago. Has American policy changed in the meantime? Very little, and to the extent that it has, the change has been in the direction of a more open and more aggressively anti-Soviet attitude. As we have repeatedly pointed out in these pages, the classic formulation of this policy was the seven points of Mr. Acheson's Berkeley speech of March, 1950. These seven points were summarized in last month's Review of the Month; all we need do here is point out that they include an unmistakable demand for the

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Soviet Union to relinquish its hold on eastern Europe and allow the countries of that area to be the victims of a counter-revolution. And we should add that it has recently been officially confirmed that the seven points still remain the basis of American policy. Writing in the *New York Times* of February 21st, James Reston had this to say:

...the United States government's idea of what constitutes the basis for an understanding [with the Soviet Union] is still the same as it was last March when Secretary of State Acheson made one of his major foreign policy speeches at the University of California. In that speech, Mr. Acheson defined some of the things that would have to take place before any real confidence could be expected, and this "basis of reasonable security," officials here emphasized, still stands.

Reston follows this report with a summary of the seven points.

*Business Week* puts the whole matter even more concisely in its issue of March 10th. After sketching Washington's attitude toward a new Big Four conference, it adds: "All this means the United States will ask Russia to clear out of Germany and start loosening its grip on eastern Europe."

It's the same old policy: destruction of the Soviet security zone in Europe.

The United States has thus been consistently and flagrantly violating the basic rule of the power-politics game ever since the final repudiation of Roosevelt's policy by Byrnes and Bevin in the summer of 1945. At no time since August, 1945, has there been any sign of American willingness to respect the security zones which two of the world's great powers clearly regard as vital to their national existence. In the case of China, this policy has already led to war—a war which will inevitably spread throughout the Far East if American policy remains what it is today. In the case of the Soviet Union, too, the policy must sooner or later lead to war. (On the Soviet Union's concern for the protection of its security, see the article by Jon Naar in this issue entitled "Soviet Foreign Policy.")

On the purely power-politics level, the United States has been as aggressive and provocative toward the Soviet Union and China as those nations would be toward the United States if they sent troops to conquer Mexico and issued statements to the effect that a peaceful settlement of the world's tensions could come only if the friendship between the United States and Canada were dissolved and Canada were integrated into the Soviet bloc.

American policy has already produced a local war, and it will



produce a global war. Those are the plain facts which any clear-headed analysis of post-war power politics reveals.

But haven't we proved more than we set out to prove? Haven't we proved that the United States is after all the only aggressive country and that in claiming to be menaced by the aggression of others it is doing precisely the kind of lying which at the outset we decided to assume no one was doing?

To answer these questions we need to pass beyond the level of power politics and consider the present situation from the angle of the struggle between the systems.

If the American ruling class is sincere in its belief that this country is menaced by external dangers—and we believe that there is no question that it is sincere—the reason is not that any other *nation* is threatening the United States. On the contrary, as we have seen, in the sphere of strictly *international* relations the threats are all the other way around. The menace which weighs on the minds and souls of the American ruling class is the expansion of the socialist *system* which takes place not through any of the means known to power politics but through internal revolutions in countries where the old order is rottenest and weakest. But that the edifice of world capitalism (including its colonial dependencies) is tottering, that if left alone it would soon fall apart and the parts would gravitate into the orbit of the growing socialist world—these things the American ruling class cannot and will not admit, even to itself. It *must* have some other explanation of the dangers that face it, an explanation which does not involve the morally fatal admission that the very system which makes it the ruling class and provides it with wealth and privileges, has been put to the supreme historical test and has failed. And the American ruling class has found that explanation in the hypothesis that every movement anywhere that seriously seeks the replacement of the old order by the new system of socialism is but an arm, an extension, a manifestation of the Russian nation. Our leaders are familiar, from the experience of wartime, with fifth columns and psychological warfare of the most varied kinds; and all this provides a convenient pattern by which they can interpret the world socialist movement. Socialism is turned in imagination into a gigantic Russian fifth column, the sole purpose of which is to promote the interests of a diabolical new kind of imperialism.

The American ruling class thus abolishes the strange and unacceptable world of revolution and socialism. It sees the great historical drama of the 20th century—the worldwide transition to a new socialist order—in terms familiar from its own experience: everything is reduced to power politics, imperialism, fifth columns, cloaks and daggers. And it proves to itself (and, alas, to most of its

countrymen) that its own aggressive policy is really only a feeble and belated defense against the all-encompassing aggression of the super-enemy whose headquarters are in Moscow.

It follows that the issue is after all not one of lying; the American ruling class undoubtedly believes in its own interpretation of history. The tragedy is that this warped interpretation drives it to adopt policies which have no chance of success and which, if persisted in, will lead to certain disaster. For it is obvious that in a world of sovereign nations, aggressive power politics will sooner or later lead to global war; and it is also obvious that global war, far from halting the transition to socialism, merely speeds the process up.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that World War III is inevitable. It would be, in all probability, if the United States had the means to play its crazy game of politics out to the end. But for that the United States needs allies to provide the manpower and the bases required for an attack on the vast expanses and the determined peoples of Eurasia from the Elbe to the Pacific. And they must be allies who are willing to be led into war with their eyes open and in the full knowledge that what awaits them is the kind of total devastation that has been visited upon Korea since June 25, 1950.

Whether the United States has such allies and, assuming that it does, whether it can hold them: these are the decisive questions which the world now faces. If it has them and can hold them, war will surely come. If it has already lost them, or if it loses them in the near future, war may yet be avoided.

There never has been a situation like this in history before, and there probably never will be again. Any one who claims to know how it will come out is obviously a faker. But one thing is pretty plain, and that is that time is now on the side of peace. The allies and hoped-for allies of the United States are waking up. With increasing horror, they are applying the lessons of Korea to themselves; with increasing clarity, they are seeing the end of the road along which the United States is leading them. Heartening evidence to this effect is contained in an article ("The British Peace Movement") later in this issue of MR. As an eloquent footnote to this article, we reproduce here a letter from a Manchester, England, minister of the gospel which appeared in the *New York Times* of March 10:

Some of us here in England—our number is not inconsiderable and we are far from being Communists—are much perturbed at the way we are being led step by step toward war. America has not suffered as we have done, and it seems dreadful indeed that a country that once seemed so stable is now heading toward an appalling conflict and dragging us with her.

What strikes us most is the callous obliviousness of your statesmen to what a war will really involve. This country will almost certainly be entirely obliterated; and as we see America turning down with contempt—as it seems to many of us—every attempt to bring about a meeting between the democracies and the Communist-controlled nations we are losing hope.

In the name of humanity—of men, women, and children—can the statesmen of America, I ask, do nothing more than goad us all on toward an abyss whose horror is beyond imagination?...

Those who feel this way may still be “losing hope”; but as their numbers grow, they may see that they can take their fate in their own hands; and if that ever happens there will again be hope in the world.

The crucial factor in the international scene today is thus the attitude of the peoples of the nations actually or potentially allied to the United States—the overwhelming majority of plain people who ask little more than to be allowed to live their lives in peace. They, and probably they alone, can now stop the drift to war. Let us hope and pray that they understand and use their power before it is too late.

## WAR, PEACE, AND LABOR

Our views on the role the American labor movement has been playing in the current critical state of national and international affairs are admirably expressed in the following editorial from the York, Pennsylvania, *Gazette and Daily* of February 14, 1951:

High labor officials are letting it be known that they are very much disappointed in the treatment they're getting at the hands of the government.

They don't like the way the wage-price problem is being figured.

They don't like the fact that they have just about been frozen out of the government mobilization apparatus.

They are reported to be alarmed at the methods the government used to persuade the railroad switchmen to return to work.

Some of them have even gone so far as to say that big business has all but taken over in Washington.

Well, the officials who are going around in circles now trying somehow to salvage a bit of prestige have no right to be disappointed. They are getting just what they deserve.

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They are getting compliments from the high and mighty of the land for their job in knocking Communists and so-called Communists out of the main-stream of the labor movement.

What they are really being praised for is creating a weak, divided labor movement which does not even have the strength to win a place in a mobilization program for its leaders.

The officials who are worried now about big business in Washington and so forth have failed miserably in their job since the close of the second world war.

They have failed to keep wages abreast even of the cost of living. They have failed to protect working conditions. They have failed in political action. They have failed in organization.

But their great failure has been their utter lack of responsibility in the cause of world peace.

No group in the United States is better situated in the social scheme of things to lead a constructive struggle for peace than the working people. No group stands to lose more by war. No group has more to win through peace.

The American labor movement, as a whole, has sacrificed almost all its objectives because its leaders refused to see that these could be attained only if a larger objective, peace, were attained.

Now, when developments in Korea have made it clear that many Americans are fearful of a global war, not the representatives of labor but those of conservative interests are speaking out.

Many Americans are looking for the kind of leadership which can provide a rational, genuine, sincere program for peace.

How much brighter the future of the world would seem if officials of labor unions in this country had so conducted themselves these past few years that they were ready to accept this leadership.

(March 15, 1951)

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*Breathes there a man with soul so dead  
Who never has been called a Red?*

—Anon

## SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

BY JON NAAR

Many people, alarmed at the growing prospects of a third world war, are finding it harder than ever to grasp the basic meaning of Soviet behavior in the world today. Elementary facts are obscured in the fog of cold-war hysteria. And yet on the issue of understanding the Russians hinges the answer to "War or Peace?"

Current political thinking has, with minor exceptions, polarized into two neatly packaged explanations of Soviet behavior: one views the USSR as a malignant pursuer of world supremacy, in no way different from Nazi Germany; the other holds the Soviets to be working idealistically for world peace and harmony. The fact that both interpretations are naive and easily disproved in no way diminishes the sincere intensity with which they are believed. A third interpretation—that the Russians are neither devils nor angels—seems not only possible but more consistent with reality. This approach has two serious drawbacks: first, it is more complex; and second, it does not fit the propaganda needs of either the Voice of America or Radio Moscow. Nevertheless, if any true insight into Soviet behavior is to be gained, it can come only through persevering with the more complicated method.

Foreign policy is seldom simple and clear cut; it is rather a tangled skein of economic, political, and social threads constantly influenced by and in turn influencing changing world conditions. The basis of Soviet foreign policy is perhaps best understood in terms of Soviet national objectives as they relate to Marxist theory, to the Soviet experience at home, and to changing conditions abroad. We propose, therefore, to examine Soviet foreign policy from the following viewpoints: (1) World Revolution; (2) Socialism in One Country; and (3) the USSR as a Major World Power.

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*Jon Naar, who holds the rank of Major in the British army, served during World War II as an intelligence officer in the Middle East and with the resistance movements in the Balkans. He has long been active in the British Labor Party and is currently engaged on a research project at Columbia University's Russian Institute as part of the work of preparing a book on British and Soviet economic planning.*

### World Revolution

At one time, Marxist theory envisaged the proletarian revolution as a more or less simultaneous occurrence throughout the advanced bourgeois nations, followed by fierce resistance from the forces of world capitalism. The first country to overthrow capitalism, however, was not, as had been expected, industrial Germany, but backward agrarian Russia; furthermore, the revolution did not rapidly spread from its point of origin. Capitalist resistance followed swiftly. In December, 1917, Britain and France secretly agreed to support counter-revolution in Russia and divided up the southern part of the country into spheres of influence. By the summer of 1918, direct intervention was launched by Britain, France, Japan, and the United States. Soviet Russia was virtually cut off from the rest of the world, and her leaders had little time to devote to affairs not directly concerned with sheer survival. The Bolsheviks did, however, continue to hope for a spread of the revolution; specifically, they counted on a revolution in Germany which would counterbalance the deteriorating situation in Russia. This was probably the main thought behind the foundation of the Comintern in Moscow in March, 1919.

No successful proletarian uprising materialized in Germany. In April, 1919, a Soviet Government was set up in Bavaria; but this was short-lived. Two years later, the German Communists failed in an attempt to organize an uprising in the industrial centers of the country. This was a crushing defeat for the Comintern and for Soviet hopes of world revolution.

The introduction of the New Economic Policy in 1921, and the Rapallo Treaty in 1922, were clear indications that Soviet policy was undergoing a radical change. When the final German Communist attempt at revolution was smashed by the Stresemann government, further Soviet hopes for revolutionary aid from abroad became purely academic. To be sure, the Comintern retained the theoretical goal of world revolution; but its operations were in practice increasingly subordinated to the requirements of the Soviet Foreign Office. The Soviets needed, above all else, a breathing space for economic reconstruction at home. Soviet diplomacy moved towards a defensive role: consolidation of the revolution at home by preventing the resurgence of a new anti-Soviet coalition abroad. This called for an important reorientation in both Soviet policy and Marxist theory.

### Socialism in One Country

After Lenin's death in 1924, a bitter internal conflict came out into the open: the choice between "Socialism in One Country" and

"Permanent Revolution", symbolized by the claims of Stalin and Trotsky for leadership of the Party. Stalin's theory—that socialism could be built in Russia only by the maximum intensification of the dictatorship of the proletariat—triumphed. By 1927, Trotsky and his followers were driven into the political wilderness; Stalin's theory became official Soviet doctrine. The immediate result was the introduction of the First Five Year Plan of rapid industrialization and collectivization of agriculture. Russia's need for peace became paramount. Soviet foreign policy was, in Stalin's words at the 16th Party Congress in 1930, "a policy of peace and strengthening trading relations with all countries."

Despite continued hostility from the capitalist world, Soviet efforts to gain diplomatic recognition and international cooperation met with success. In addition to concluding a series of non-aggression treaties with its western neighbors, the USSR was able to expand trade with many capitalist countries. Imports of machinery and other capital goods for Soviet industrialization were obtained through the export of large quantities of Russian foodstuffs and raw materials. After 1933, however, the growing threat of fascism abroad revived fears of a new anti-Soviet coalition. In 1934, the USSR joined the League of Nations and actively worked for collective security and close alliances among non-aggressor nations. In the following year, mutual assistance treaties with France and Czechoslovakia were concluded by the Soviet government.

Within the USSR, spectacular progress towards the socialization of the means of production was being made; by 1936, the Soviet Union was declared to be, in its essence, a socialist state. This was given juridical expression in the new Constitution, which not only reflected the vast gains since the Revolution but pointed to the road ahead. For future Soviet foreign policy, three significant indications may be noted: first, there was no revolutionary preamble such as had characterized earlier Soviet Constitutions; second, in the granting of specific powers to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the obligation to fulfill international treaties for mutual defense was recognized (Article 49, Section L); and third, in making all Soviet citizens liable to military service without regard to class origin (Article 132), an important step was taken towards changing the Red Army into a more conventional type of national defense force.

Further evidence of the increasing emphasis on defense of the USSR was the attempt to foster friendly relations between the Comintern and the Second International on the basis of working-class unity against fascism. In effect, the Comintern had become an arm of the Soviet Foreign Office; its function was to encourage those and only those elements abroad who put the defense of the USSR in

the forefront of their policy. The Popular Front was designed by the Russians not to spread Communist revolution in the West, but to rally support for the defense of the Soviet Union.

Summarizing Soviet foreign policy up to the outbreak of World War II, we can distinguish three main stages: (1) 1917-23—expectation and active encouragement of revolution abroad; (2) 1924-29—increasing subordination of revolutionary aims to the need for international recognition; and (3) 1930-41—as “Socialism in One Country” was translated into practice by the Five Year Plans, Soviet diplomacy turned exclusively defensive.

### The USSR as a Major Power

After Munich, it became clear that Soviet efforts to build collective security could not stop the aggressive plans of Nazi Germany. When war and Nazi invasion eventually came, the Soviet system was faced with its supreme test. Thanks primarily to the farsightedness of the industrialization and collectivization programs, the Soviet Union withstood the onslaught of the most powerful military force that history had known. Despite enormous military and economic destruction (including manpower losses estimated at fifty times greater than those of the United States), the USSR survived. And in terms of *relative* power, the Soviet Union emerged from World War II far stronger than before. For better or worse, the USSR had become one of the two super-powers in the world. At Yalta, Britain and America formally recognized that Russia was bound to place great stress on regaining and further consolidating its traditional position of influence in eastern Europe; while at the same time, the western Allies agreed to Soviet claims regarding Outer Mongolia and Manchuria. As a victorious partner in the war against Germany and Japan, the USSR was accepted as one of the Big Three in the United Nations Organization.

The Soviet attitude towards the establishment of the post-war international organization was conditioned by a well-founded suspicion of western hostility. The Soviets believed that the UN's success depended, above all, on great-power unanimity and respect for state sovereignty. In their view, the UN was first and foremost an instrument to safeguard world peace; and this aim could not be accomplished if there were fundamental disagreements between the USSR and the United States—the only two powers capable of waging war. Hence the need for unanimity on all major issues containing a threat of war.

The rapid expansion of Soviet influence in the Eurasian land mass since 1945 is too glibly “explained” by charges of Red imperial-



ism. There are no economic or ideological driving forces in the structure of Soviet society which impel towards conquest of foreign markets or domination of foreign peoples. The objective conditions which drove Nazi Germany to aggression—threat of unemployment, war-preparation economy, expansionist demand for raw materials, and a racist ideology—do not exist in the USSR. One key to understanding the post-war expansion of Soviet influence lies in the peculiar nature of the USSR, which is not only a world power in the conventional sense of the term, but also the leader of world socialism. Another is the fact that Russia enjoys a unique geographical position: she is not a European power with possessions in Asia; Russia is *simultaneously* an Asian great power as well as the dominant force in Europe.

The long-range aim of the Soviet leaders is not territorial aggrandizement but the achievement of Communism—that is, the realization, through economic abundance, of “to each according to his needs”—in the USSR in the shortest possible time. In the Soviet view, this can be attained only when the productive capacity of the USSR has caught up and overtaken that of the advanced capitalist countries. Assuming that economic development continues at no more than the rate of the last few years, the Soviet planned economy is capable of raising the Russian standard of living so high as to create the conditions necessary for Communism within the span of roughly four more Five Year Plans—*provided that the USSR has twenty years of peace*. Whether the Politburo really believes in the possibility of peaceful co-existence with the capitalist world or not, it is clear that the Soviets *need* peace to achieve this one overriding goal that governs their policy at home and abroad.

At the same time, Russia must face the increasingly urgent current problems of power politics; she has to live in the same world as the United States, the leader of international capitalism. The bitter opposition of the United States to the USSR is not a mere figment of cold-war hysteria. As the other super-power in the world, and as the leader of international socialism, the Soviet Union does represent a threat to capitalist America—but perhaps in a way which is not fully appreciated in Washington. Whereas Communism has gained ground under Soviet influence, and at times with the aid of the Red Army, it exists also as a world social movement that is rapidly gathering momentum. Its growth in the Far East is much less the result of the Kremlin's policies than the heritage of western imperialist “civilization.” It is ludicrous to believe that American military power, even if launched directly at the Soviet Union, could defeat this world force. If American foreign policy continues to be negatively anti-Communist, it will contribute only to the downfall of world capitalism; physically by total rearmament, and morally by

supporting fascist Spain, a neo-Nazi Germany, and the most reactionary elements in Asia. The social democratic countries of the British Commonwealth and Scandinavia are already torn by this dilemma and are displaying little enthusiasm for the American brand of "liberation" with jellied gasoline bombs.

Further, it must be recognized that the Soviet Union, believing in the inevitable collapse of world capitalism, will do all it can to accelerate this process—with *one* vital proviso: that the long-term aim of Communism is not diverted by a third world war. Thus, the Russians are always ready to exploit and even foment revolutionary situations throughout the world, since any draining of capitalist strength is a net gain to Soviet power. What the Russians will *not* do is to intervene directly in such affairs. Soviet behavior in Korea illustrates this point: presumably, the North Korean invasion of South Korea, whatever its origins, was not against Soviet interests. However, the turn of events rapidly showed that neither the Soviet Union nor the North Koreans had a clear-cut "moral case" in the eyes of world opinion. The Soviet Union, accordingly, showed no intention of risking her neck in this particular cause; Moscow refused to supply the margin of support needed to turn the scales in the favor of the North Koreans.

From this example, two further clues emerge to understanding the Soviets: their sensitivity to world opinion and their intention to remain legally correct. It is hard to say if the Soviet leaders are expecting a war, though there is as yet little evidence of conversion of Russian industry from peace to war production. Perhaps the major Soviet preparation for the eventuality of war is in the realms of diplomacy and propaganda. Hence, the significance of continued Soviet demands for disarmament in the UN, and the Stockholm peace campaign. If general war *does* come, the Russians want to be in the moral and legal position of the aggrieved—the victim of capitalist American aggression.

Finally, Russian behavior can sometimes be explained by the fact that they make mistakes. The defection of Tito from the Cominform fold was the result of a serious Soviet blunder, which has meant an important setback to the USSR in terms of both international socialism and world power politics. Korea, too, explodes the myth of Soviet infallibility. World opinion was decidedly against the USSR until the United States allowed MacArthur to cross the 38th Parallel, despite urgent warnings from Nehru and the Chinese Communists. It was the crude ineptitude of MacArthur's ill-fated "home by Christmas" offensive which facilitated what Walter Lippman has called the greatest victory of Soviet diplomacy—the refusal of the

major Asian nations in the UN to vote for the American resolution branding Communist China an aggressor.

### Conclusions

As a result of the events that followed 1917, early hopes that the revolution would spread outside Russia were frustrated. Having survived civil war and armed intervention, the Soviet regime concentrated on gaining the stability needed to realize its economic and social goals.

With the first Five Year Plan, Stalin's policy of building socialism in one country took precedence over all other considerations: the aim of Soviet diplomacy was to provide a breathing space for the domestic program of industrialization and collectivization of agriculture. The foundations of socialism were laid by 1936, but the growing threat of fascism slowed up progress toward Communism: the main priority at home and abroad was defense of the USSR.

After World War II, suspicion of western hostility remained a dominant theme of Soviet policy. Russian participation in the UN was thought to be one way to protect the security of the Soviet Union. The Soviet leaders needed a prolonged period of peace, first, for post-war reconstruction, but above all to increase Russian productive capacity to the point where the final goal—Communism—could be realized.

In the postwar period, the USSR emerged not only as the leader of international socialism, but also as one of the two super-powers of the world. Soviet strength expanded in two ways: through a wide regional security system and by encouraging revolutionary movements which grew out of World War II.

At the risk of oversimplification, our consideration of Soviet foreign policy can be divided into three broad zones. On the one extreme, there exists a socialist state intent on the task of internal development, whose basic interest is *peace*. On the other extreme, there is a national state prepared to use *war* against a basic threat to its security. The third zone is the interpenetration of the two extremes. It is this area which introduces the imponderable into any evaluation of Soviet future conduct and its consequences for war or peace. Without directly intervening, the USSR will continue to encourage and foster socialist and revolutionary movements abroad, and in this way threaten the American attempt to maintain the *status quo*. In the cold war, the Russians will resist American attempts to extend the power of states hostile to the Soviet regime and in this way to build up the strength of the anti-Soviet world.

The greatest danger of a third world war lies perhaps in that

American capitalism may basically *fear* a prolonged period of "peaceful co-existence." Since the Soviet Union, on its past performance, has shown that the goal of Communism is feasible, United States foreign policy may well be motivated by a "Why wait until the USSR is undefeatable" attitude. America has, furthermore, conspicuously failed to produce a peacetime philosophy or program with vital appeal to other nations in general, and to underdeveloped areas in particular. Unless American capitalism is prepared to modify itself along the lines of British capitalism under the Labor government, it seems that there can be no way out of its long-term dilemma other than war with the Soviet Union.

Since the initiative in the cold war is held in varying degree and at varying times by both Russia and America, there enters a consequent element of uncertainty. If the Soviet leaders consider the interests of the USSR critically endangered, as, for example, by the re-arming of the West Germans, they may be prepared to risk general war. If, however, the United States is genuinely willing to reach a *modus vivendi* through mutual concessions (including stabilization of spheres of interest and recognition of Communist China), then a final showdown can be avoided.

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## TWO MINDS WITH BUT A SINGLE THOUGHT

*There are rumblings in every village from the Mediterranean to the Pacific. A force is gathering for a mighty effort. We think of that force as communistic. Communists exploit the situation, stirring every discontent and making the pot boil. The revolutions which are brewing are not, however, Communist in origin nor will they end even if Soviet Russia is crushed through war. The revolutionaries are hungry men who have been exploited from time out of mind. This is the century of their awakening and mobilization.*

—Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas in a speech at Tuscon, Arizona, February 14, 1951

*... it is necessary to explain that as long as imperialist oppression exists in the world, there will exist also the liberation movement of the oppressed peoples, irrespective of the will and sympathies of some rulers or other. To accuse the Soviet government of the existence in different countries of liberation movements caused by the oppression of imperialism is just as absurd as it would be absurd to accuse it of the occurrence in the world of earthquakes or tides.*

—Soviet note to Great Britain, February 25, 1951

## THE BRITISH PEACE MOVEMENT

BY A BRITISH SOCIALIST

There are many signs that in recent months a new political mood has developed in Britain. Two of the most obvious are the flood of letters received by newspapers and Members of Parliament, and the unusually large attendance at public meetings. These are the normal barometers of opinion; but anyone who travels about the country can supply other examples of the anxious reaction of the British people to events in the Far East, to the proposal to rearm Germany, and to the general drift to war.

Here, for instance, is a typical case. The London borough of Hampstead is a middle-class and strongly Tory district, in which the local newspaper has faithfully echoed Tory policy. Just after Christmas, three rank-and-file members of the Labor Party wrote letters to this paper urging a peaceful settlement of the Chinese crisis, and the editor featured their letters in a prominent position. The response was immediate, and under a special headline "Stop The Drift To War!", a series of similar letters appeared in subsequent weeks. More, the paper's editorials took much the same line, and front-page headlines were given to stories of resolutions and petitions sponsored by local groups. As a result, an entirely new organization was set up in the area, with some Liberal and Tory, as well as Labor, support. Nearly a thousand people attended its first open meeting.

Much the same story could be told of scores of cities. The local newspapers of Britain—which are more responsive to their readers' opinions than the big national newspapers—have been full of letters urging negotiations with China, supporting the attempts at mediation made by India, or protesting against the arming of the Germans. In any town, a meeting called to demand a policy of peace will be packed. In one small Sussex town—about the size of Brewster, N. Y.—hundreds were turned away from the hall, and this is a solid Tory constituency. In Glasgow, the largest hall in the city was full; the same has been true in places as different as Hull and Birmingham,

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*The author is a regular contributor to MONTHLY REVIEW. His articles include "British Labor and Socialism," in the issues of September and October, 1949, and "After the General Election," in the issue of April, 1950.*

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Bournemouth and Bristol. Often such meetings have been routine gatherings of such groups as the United Nations Association, or the Young Liberals, or similar public bodies; but, as the resolutions they pass reveal, they have become demonstrations for peace. In addition, a very large number of Local Labor Parties have gone on record against German rearmament, and in favor of a British foreign policy which would resolutely oppose MacArthurism in the Far East and in Europe.

Feeling in the Labor Party, indeed, has been running very high—there are some who compare it to Labor sentiment at the time of the Spanish Civil War. Certainly, it is more spontaneous and more profound than anything that has been seen since Labor took office in 1945. For years, scores of thousands of Labor supporters have been inactive or apathetic, despite private anxieties about the course the Government was taking in foreign affairs. Now they seem to have sprung to life: the issue of war or peace is urgent and clear-cut.

The significant feature of this new situation, is that it has nothing to do with the British Communists. This campaign is running *without* them, though there is little or no Red-baiting—the lesson of the United States has sunk deep into the minds of many British socialists. But Labor supporters who have previously shied away from “peace” movements (partly because no Labor member is permitted to associate with a Communist body, partly because the Stockholm Appeal seemed one-sided and disingenuous to many socialists) have now decided that it is time to remove the quotation marks from “peace.”

One reflection of this new mood has been the formation of the Peace With China Council, a new *ad hoc* national committee which was set up at the end of last year. Its members already include thirty MPs, and at least a dozen peers, among them Viscount Stansgate, formerly a minister in the Labor government, and Lord Boyd Orr. It is, in short, an eminently respectable group, including Tories and Liberals. It is in no way connected with the Communist Party. On the contrary, no Communist could subscribe to its statement of aims, which includes criticism of North Korea as a technical aggressor and support for the original UN intervention in Korea. But it is determined to do all it can to prevent Britain from becoming embroiled in a calamitous and unnecessary war with China. It insists on the admission of the Chinese Republic to the Security Council, and on the justice of Peking's claim to Formosa. It opposes sanctions against China as leading to war, and calls upon the British government to take an independent line in foreign affairs. Its position, in short, is much the same as that of Nehru, whose stand for peace has

found widespread support in Britain among people of all parties.

Those who founded the Peace With China Council did not intend it to become a new *movement*, with members and affiliates. They simply assumed the tasks of giving leadership and some kind of coordination to the many groups which were springing up spontaneously all over Britain, of supplying them with advice and speakers for meetings, and of undertaking national propaganda activities such as lobbying in Parliament, press releases, and letters to national newspapers. The correspondence columns of *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* bear witness to its success.

The Council's initial appeal was published at Christmas. By the first week in February, thirty cities had set up local Councils on the same model, another thirty were being formed, and more than seventy large public meetings, with nationally prominent speakers, had been held by groups directly associated with the national Council. Starting without an office or paid staff, by mid-February it was forced to employ a full-time staff of four merely to keep abreast of routine work.

One must mention here, too, the part that the *New Statesman and Nation* has played in mobilizing opinion behind a non-Communist peace campaign. Its editor, Kingsley Martin, played a prominent part in founding the Peace With China Council, and its readers—estimated at 300,000—have probably formed the solid core of opposition to war with China. Week after week, the *New Statesman's* editorials and letter columns have reflected the feelings of socialists who are critical of Soviet and international Communist policy, but are aghast at the policies of MacArthur, at the thought of fighting a war with the Japanese and the Nazis as allies, and at the fantastic idea of a "crusade to free Asia."

But it is important to realize that such sentiments are by no means confined to the Left. Many Tories and Liberals have taken an active part in both local and national agitation for a peaceful solution to the crisis—especially for the recognition of what are almost universally regarded here as China's legitimate national interests. Though opinions may differ sharply over European problems, it is hard to detect any "war party" on Far Eastern affairs. The pressure, in fact, is all the other way. Anyone who doubts this should read the report of the House of Commons debate which preceded Attlee's visit to Washington. When the Tory leader, R. A. Butler, said that the British people wished to be sure that they were helping to decide their own fate, there was more than an echo of Amery's cry to the Labor benches in 1939, when Chamberlain's plans had crashed in ruin: "Speak for England." The fact that, within two hours of Truman's statement about the atom bomb, nearly two hundred

Labor MPs had signed a letter calling for the withdrawal of British troops if Manchuria were bombed, was as representative of popular feeling as the similar demand of the Archbishop of York when he protested against South Korean atrocities. The truth is that the British people feel that they were led up the garden path in Korea, and that insufficient attention has been paid to the British position by Washington.

No one can doubt that the Labor government is well aware of this feeling, and that it has had even graver misgivings about American policy than its spokesmen have revealed. There is a continual pressure, from many quarters, and not least from the Labor Members of Parliament, for Britain to take a line of its own, where American policy seems foolish, bellicose, and hysterical. No one, moreover, can doubt that a war against China might well divide Britain—and not merely on normal party lines—as it has not been divided since the French Revolution. A Tory MP wrote the other day that “the British people see no case, moral, political or strategic, for war with China.” *Time* magazine put the same point succinctly: “the British are *not yet* psychologically prepared for war.” (my italics)

Nevertheless, the Labor government still goes most of the way with Washington. Why? First, its opposition to war with China is as much strategic as political: nothing seems more foolish to it than to bog down men and material several thousand miles from their main bases in what is essentially a sideshow. Moreover, war with China would not only be an invitation to Chinese intervention in other sectors—notably Hong Kong and Malaya—but it might also be the start of a world war which would spread to Europe. Next, the Labor government believes that the real threat to British security comes from the Soviet Union, and to meet that threat it hopes for assistance from American arms and American armies. The fear that isolationism might triumph in the United States if Britain proves too recalcitrant an ally is continually in the Cabinet’s mind. Washington knows how to use that fear when high policy is under discussion.

While a large part of the Labor Party does not consider that Russian aggression is imminent in Europe or the Middle East, the Cabinet seems to take a different view. Under strong stimulus from Washington, it has now launched a massive rearmament program which can only mean the erosion of Labor’s social achievements, new austerity and hardships for the workers and old people. For, if it comes to a showdown, Whitehall is the prisoner of Washington. In the same way, Labor MPs are ultimately the prisoners of the Cabinet. They will speak at public meetings, or in the House; they will write articles and letters, protesting against the continuing drift



## THE BRITISH PEACE MOVEMENT

to war; but, as any one of them will tell you, they will not go the length of voting against the Government. Labor's majority is so slim that a revolt of merely a dozen MPs—if the Conservatives refused to rescue Attlee by voting on his side—could bring the government down. Since an election now would certainly produce a Tory victory—Labor's stock is at its lowest since 1945—a foreign policy revolt might make Churchill Prime Minister. As one Labor MP put it the other day, "the Fulton policy is bad enough at secondhand."

Such motives, coupled with party loyalty, act as a brake upon the movement of protest against the approaching war. No one doubts that if Labor were out of office, and the Tories in, Britain would be swept by an anti-war agitation, just as the country would be in the throes of industrial disputes which even now are barely kept in hand by a Labor government.

It is important to attach the right label to this new political mood. It is not one of "appeasement" in the Chamberlain sense. It is not one of "fellow-travelling" or "softness towards Communism." Most of those who have been attending the recent series of meetings would make the Soviet Union carry a substantial part of the blame for the worsening of the world situation, though they do not believe that Russia is now planning an aggressive war on the Hitler model. It is not, moreover, as many Americans try to make out, a mood of "anti-Americanism." It is, fundamentally, a revulsion against the prospect of another war. Most people in Britain do not accept the view that war is inevitable: so long as every attempt to maintain the peace has not been made they will not be "psychologically prepared" for the disasters that war would bring upon them. And, at the moment, they fear most the bellicose hysteria which seems to have swept through American public life, the atomania in high places, the apparent unwillingness or incapacity of the American government to enter into genuine negotiations for a settlement which takes account of the legitimate interests of both sides. They fear that the pattern of Korea may be repeated in Europe, and that American policy is drifting steadily towards a war alliance of MacArthur, Chiang Kai-shek, Bao Dai, Latin America, Franco, and, as soon as terms are agreed, a reborn *Wehrmacht* and *Luftwaffe*, commanded by the Nazi butchers who are now demanding (and shamefully being tendered) groveling apologies for their "false imprisonment."

That is why the wave of protest is directed so much against the United States, and why there are so many demands for an independent British policy of mediation and peace. The Anglo-American "partnership" is being disrupted, not by people in Britain whose sole desire is to stop the drift to war, but by Americans who talk glibly of atom

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warfare differing "only in degree" from the air raids of 1940, who seem only to envisage a dictated settlement, and who are riding roughshod over the opinions and interests of the other "equal" nations of the West.

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### "FREE WORLD" DEPARTMENT

#### PRESENT HEAVY INVENTORIES A PERIL IF PEACE COMES

*A sudden, unexpected slackening of the present international tension would pose a tremendous problem right now for many of their customers who are carrying heavy inventories purchased at top prices, according to a survey just completed among the 4,700 credit, financial, and business executives who comprise the memberships of the New York Credit and Financial Management Association and the Los Angeles Credit Managers' Association, affiliates of the National Association of Credit Men. . . . As viewed by these executives, should the present war preparedness programs both here and abroad be cancelled suddenly as a result of peace negotiations, many of their customers would be caught between high-priced inventories and tumbling prices. Such a reversal of the present international situation would spell sudden death for many firms—particularly marginal concerns—whose capital is now tied up in high-cost merchandise.*

—From a Feb. 23rd news release of the New York Credit and Financial Management Association

#### STOCKS SUFFER FROM MINOR "PEACE SCARE"

By Elmer C. Walzer

*NEW YORK, N. Y.—Stocks suffered from a miniature peace scare last week.*

*War issues—rails and steels—declined. Utilities, top peace issues, reached new highs for the year.*

*It wasn't that Wall Street anticipated a world peace, but some of the market experts wondered what will happen to the defense effort if the current war effort isn't enlarged.*

*They pointed out that by late summer the industries of the nation will be turning out materiel of war at a tremendous rate. A rate far higher than the materiel is being used up even including arms for a new force in Europe. Such a situation, it was felt, might have to bring cutbacks in arms output.*

*So there was some cautionary selling.*

—Minneapolis Tribune, February 25, 1951

## AS A SOCIALIST SEES IT

BY G. D. H. COLE

Perhaps it may be worthwhile, amid the deep confusions which beset us nowadays on all sides, for one lifelong socialist, who makes no profession of being able to see the whole thing clear in his mind, to set down as frankly as he can the broad attitude to which he has been reluctantly and unhappily driven by the impact of recent events. In order to do this, I must go back at least to the time just before the war in Korea began. The situation, as I think we then all understood it to be, was that the Americans had not only withdrawn their forces from Korea, but had stated quite openly that they did not regard South Korea as a defensible area in the event of war. I was not greatly surprised when the North Korean government took these events as an indication that South Korea could be overrun by its forces without serious risk of American armed intervention on the other side. I myself was not so sure of this, in view of General MacArthur's known propensity for acting on his own; and I felt that the North Koreans were committing a grave error of judgment. I was, however, quite unable to regard their action as "aggression" in any sense that could properly call for intervention by the United Nations. I did not regard the 38th Parallel as constituting in any sense an international frontier; and I looked on the war in Korea as essentially a civil and not an international war. Of course, I knew that the North Koreans had been armed by the Soviet Union and the South Koreans by the United States; but that did not appear to me to turn the war into a war between two countries, or to involve the United Nations—unless UN were to be regarded, as the Americans evidently do regard it, as part of the mechanism of the West in the cold war against Communism.

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This article, by the well-known British socialist economist and historian, appeared in the *New Statesman and Nation* of February 3, 1951, and is reprinted here by permission. According to an editorial in the next week's *New Statesman*, "Professor G. D. H. Cole's declaration of faith . . . has evoked a remarkable response. A huge post-bag from people of many shades of opinion has revealed a pent-up longing for a simple, strong anti-war line. Most of all, of course, this is to be found in the ranks of disappointed socialists. His article has exposed the surely inexcusable failure of the government to understand how deeply it has been alienating its supporters by its failure to sustain, in the face of American pressure, an independent British peace policy."—THE EDITORS.

Looking on the Korean war as a civil war, I wanted the North to win. The government of South Korea appeared to me to be a hopelessly reactionary puppet affair, which had no chance of survival without American support, and I could not contemplate any solution of the Korean question that would involve permanent American intervention on the Asian continent. I do not like Communism; but I like even less reactionary landlordism backed by foreign force against the will of the people. I therefore thought that the unification of Korea under the North Korean government was the least unpleasant way out of a very unpleasant situation; and I hoped that the Americans, in view of what they had said about the military indefensibility of South Korea, would acquiesce in this limited withdrawal from an outpost of no great importance to them unless they were contemplating aggressive action against China.

When the Americans did intervene in arms, and appealed to UN, I felt their action to be entirely wrong; and I held that other countries, including Great Britain, should have refused to support them. In the first place, I felt it to be a sheer misuse of UN to take advantage of the absence of the Russians from the Security Council and of the presence of the wrong Chinese government—against which this country ought to have taken a much stronger stand—to convert UN from what it was set up to be, an instrument of agreed policy among the great powers, into an agent of one half of the world against the other half. Secondly, I felt that the American action in respect of Formosa, even though the British government did not associate itself with it, put the Americans thoroughly in the wrong. At that stage, most of my friends were telling me that the British would be able to stop the Americans from crossing the 38th Parallel, and that it would be easier to do this if we joined forces with them in Korea than if we refused to do so. I strongly disagreed; and on this point at any rate the course of events proved me right.

When the American forces, dragging us with them, advanced right to the Manchurian frontier, I was quite unable to blame the Chinese for intervening. Whether or not the Americans meant at once to put Manchurian industries out of action, it became perfectly plain that, by occupying all Korea and by upholding Chiang Kai-shek in Formosa, the Americans were building up a strategic position for war against Communist China as part of their general strategy in the world struggle against Communism. Such a policy seemed to me to be disastrous, because it was inconsistent with the attempt to bring about a *détente* in the Far East and because it was bound, far from weakening Communist influence in Asia, to strengthen it immensely by making more and more Asians look to Communist China as the main defender of Asian freedom against white imperialism as repre-

sented by America and by any white country that allied itself with America in the Korean war. I believe in the cause of Asian freedom: I hold that the Asian countries ought to manage their own affairs, and I do not see how they can be expected to put any trust in the white countries as long as the Americans are openly supporting Chiang in his expressed determination to reconquer China.

The events in the Far East, and British policy in relation to them, would have been bad enough if they had stood alone. But they went along with hardly less disastrous developments in Europe. I believe most British people agree with me in being utterly opposed to any proposal to rearm West Germany. I am utterly opposed to this, both because I thoroughly mistrust the Germans and do not feel at all sure on whose side their arms would be used, and also because I feel certain that the effect of rearmament will be to bring the worst sort of militarist reactionaries back to power in Germany. But most of all I oppose West German rearmament because it will create in Germany a position closely analogous to that which has brought dire misfortune in Korea—two enemies of one nation facing each other across an utterly unreal frontier, and each supported by one of the major contestants in the cold war. What could be worse than this as a means of averting the world war which we are all still professing our desire to prevent?

What attitude should socialists and Labor Party supporters who feel as I do take up in the present situation? I believe the Soviet Union to have been quite largely responsible for the disastrous worsening of the world situation which followed the introduction of the Marshall Plan—though I put the main blame for its subsequent worsening (after the Communist victory in China) on the United States. I am deeply distrustful of Communists and fellow-travellers in the light of past experience. I am not prepared to associate myself in any protest in which I may find myself being made a tool of Communist policy. I want, not to side with the Soviet Union or the western Communists against the Americans, but to make a stand for peace and democratic socialism against them both.

How to do this, except by writing down frankly what I believe and hoping that it will serve as some encouragement to others who broadly agree with me, I do not know. I must, however, say this. If Great Britain gets dragged into war with China by the Americans, I shall be on the side of China, and so, I believe, will be enough of my fellow-countrymen to make a deep rift in our national solidarity. If Great Britain agrees to rearm West Germany, I shall feel unable to take any further part in exhorting the British workers to make an all-out productive effort in order to produce arms for a war in Europe that will no longer be in any sense a war for freedom and democracy.

Not, of course, that what I do personally will make a ha'porth of difference. I am writing this down, not out of any belief in my own importance, but because I believe much of it represents what many good socialists and democrats are feeling, with a chill at their hearts, and because it is about time someone said it in print.

I know, of course, that quite a number of people will treat everything I have said as in effect irrelevant to the main issue. They will say that it is so important for Great Britain to stand in well with America, and to secure American help in resisting Russian pressure in Europe, that nothing else matters, that we must do whatever the Americans tell us to do rather than run any risk of a break which might lead to a recrudescence of American isolationism and would certainly cause the Russians to rejoice. I would ask those who take this line whether they really mean we must blindly follow the Americans even when American policy, instead of keeping us out of world war, appears to be landing us right into it. I believe the best hope for the world—and the *only* hope for Great Britain—is in averting a new war and in working for a *détente* on the basis of a world in which communism, capitalism and socialism live together, as Catholicism and Protestantism, or Mohammedanism and Christianity, managed to do in past epochs. The hope of that coming about lies in playing for time, and in doing what we can to avoid an absolutely clear-cut division of the world into two hostile armed camps—which is precisely what the Americans seem bent on bringing about. World war, for us at any rate, would be the ultimate disaster. The duty of democratic socialists is therefore to do what they can to get in between the rival pressure groups of world revolution and world capitalism. The "third force" cannot now be a great armed power: it can still, given the right lead from Britain, be a great force for clear thinking and plain common sense.

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*We live in an extension of the period which began with the effort to crush the Russian revolution. It is not because of the undoubted evils in Russia that war is being mustered against her; the same men are only too ready to compromise with the same evils elsewhere and to use the same evil methods at home. It is the good, not the evil, in the Soviet Union which stirs their hate.*

—I. F. Stone, the *Daily Compass*, March 16, 1951

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## O PIONEERS!—OR, THE LAND OF THE FREE AND THE HOME OF THE BRAVE. 1951

(Lines inspired by a photograph, taken by Morris Warman, printed large in *New York Herald Tribune* of February 8, 1951, entitled "Take Cover—Air Raid!", showing two American schoolchildren, boy and girl, in the edifying act of crouching under their desks with heads lowered and hands over eyes; on the classroom wall above them is a large map of the United States, the land of the pioneers, the free and the brave.)

*Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep  
So I'll grow up and shoot a Red—  
If I don't forget to get under the bed  
When the air raid sirens blow.*

*I study hard when I'm in school,  
Military training and the Golden Rule.  
I'll fight those Reds, my life I'll risk—  
If I don't forget to dive under the desk  
When the air raid sirens blow.*

*This country I will fight to save,  
Its rulers wise and people brave,  
Those Reds I'll bomb when I am able—  
If I don't forget to duck under a table  
When the air raid sirens blow!*

—Shaemas O'Sheel

(continued from inside front cover)

will be Jon Naar who has an article on Soviet foreign policy in this issue. His topic will be: "Is Britain Socialist?"

One more Associates meeting has been planned to take place before summer. This will be in the nature of an MR birthday celebration, and both editors have accepted an invitation to be present and to speak. It will be held on Thursday, May 17th. Further details will be announced later.

Meanwhile, remember the two dates: the third Thursdays of April and May.

The next issue will include the first part of a two-part article by one of the editors on the American ruling class. It was stimulated by a letter from a subscriber chiding us for using the term "ruling class" so frequently in Reviews of the Month. The article attempts to explain just what we mean and why we think our usage is valid.

A Chicago subscriber writes:

Because we are not able to make the kind of contribution we would like to, I want to tell you what we are doing. I got some "dime banks" and have so far located eight people who have agreed to put away a dime a week for MR. Our aim is to get at least ten. This will mean a year from last week MR should receive \$52 from some of its Chicago supporters. All those I have asked to go in on this project have been very enthusiastic; and though it is money for the quite distant future, yet it seemed to me that it was considerably better than nothing. Of course, the second part of the job is to keep reminding ourselves and others to put in the dimes. For this purpose, I thought I would make out a very simple card which could be checked 52 times. Maybe this idea might appeal to others who want to help but don't feel they can send a large contribution at any one time.

It sounds like a fine idea to us. If one-third of MR's subscribers put aside a dime a week, we'd have more than \$4000 a year—most of what we need to make up the original Matthiessen subsidy.

All of which reminds us of the suggestion we mentioned in last month's issue: give a sub to a friend on condition that if the friend likes the mag he or she will do likewise, and so on. If one-third of our subscribers acted on this idea, that would bring in between 800 and 900 new subs; if one-third of the new subscribers. . . . But you can finish the calculation (at least roughly). Dreams, you may say, just like all the pyramid club dreams. Sure, but we have a right to dream. And just in case any of you would like to help make the dreams come true, we enclose two sub blanks. Please use *at least* one of them!

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